

Victim Impact Statement

The victim impact statement may be either written or oral. It allows the victim to provide information for the judge's consideration at sentencing. It allows the victim to show the pain, anguish, and financial devastation the crime may have caused. The judge really does not know how truly affected the victim is unless the victim speaks up.

When you give your victim impact statement, you may choose to be very brief - or you may decide to talk at length. You may have other family members join you in giving a statement.

The victim impact statement is the **ONLY TIME** that you will have to address the one person - the judge - who can decide the fate of the defendant.

The victim impact statement is **YOUR TIME - USE IT!!**

Some items to consider when deciding what to say (always go into detail)

- Physical injuries suffered
- Medical treatment required
- Psychological injuries suffered
- Psychological treatment required
- Amount of time lost from work
- Prognosis for further psychological treatment
- Prognosis for further medical treatment including surgery, therapy, etc.
- Lingering pain, anxiety, anguish, and nightmares
- The affect on your lifestyle
- The affect on your family's lifestyle
- In the event of a death, tell what it is like to get a phone call in the middle of the night, to rush to the hospital and not knowing if your loved one will still be alive when you reach them.
- In the event of a death, describe what it is like to explain a death to younger siblings still alive, to the children left behind, or other family members.
- In the event of the death of a child, explain what it is like to give birth to a child, raise and nurture them with love and care - and then to have them taken away before they have lived a full life.
- In the event of the death of a spouse, tell what it is like to marry the person of your dreams, to plan, to love, to expect to celebrate your 50th anniversary with that person - and then to have them taken away.

Source: Arizona Department of Public Safety, Crime Victims Support

<http://www.dps.state.az.us/azvictims/victimRights/default.asp>

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